

# GROWTH RINGS



## Appalachian Forest Heritage Area Newsletter

Vol 2 No 2

### Stakeholders Meeting

The Spring '03 Stakeholders Meeting, April 10 – 11 at Camp Caesar in Webster County, was a rousing success. The location was lovely and folks enjoyed the “back to camp” atmosphere of the facilities. Highlights of the meeting included:

- Leading effective meetings training by George Constantz. We learned how to be prepared for the meeting, how to deal with problems, and most important – to make every meeting result in important accomplishments.
- Tour to see the “Big Sycamore” with fascinating local stories by William Gillespie, retired state forester.
- The evening community reception was impressive, with over 75 Webster Countians coming to join us for dinner and a showcase of forest-related craftspeople and community projects.
- Late-night impromptu campfire circle in the rain, in Camp Caesar’s historic covered campfire pavilion.
- Meeting reports on Friday from the task groups and communities, including
  - a demonstration of how the asset map works
  - a concept presentation on interpretive tours,
  - a chance to express preferences on logo ideas,

### Report from the Northern Forest

Mike Wilson, from the Northern Forest Center shared with us the progress and plans of another major forest heritage region. Stretching across northern New York, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine, the Northern Forest is the largest undeveloped forest in the eastern United States. They are facing major challenges with changes in their economic base, and with many large industry property owners now at a stage of wishing to sell their landholdings.

The Northern Forest Center mission is to build a public consensus to conserve and enhance the cultural, civic, economic and ecological wealth of the Northern Forest region.

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### Forming our Organization

The Stakeholders present at the April 11 meeting acted on the recommendation to form a non-profit organization for the Appalachian Forest Heritage Area. The group voted to approve forming the non-profit corporation (in West Virginia and Maryland) and to approve the suggested Bylaws to guide operations of the organizations.

In accordance with the Bylaws, and Interim Board was selected. The primary task of this Board will be to oversee the nomination and selection process for the Governing Council of the AFHA. Twelve representatives were elected to the Interim Board:

Geographic representatives (community reps selected by community):

- One from Randolph Co – Ruth Brinker
- One from Webster Co – Ben Randolph
- One from Garrett Co – not yet designated
- At large – Roger Boyer

Interest group representatives:

- Forestry – Cinda Francis
- Natural resources – Peggy Pings
- History – Bruce Betler
- Tourism & Business – Andre Nabors

Organization representatives (selected by organization):

- WVU – Steve Selin
- CVI – not yet designated
- Monongahela NF – not yet designated
- At large – Barbara McWhorter

### Strategic Plan Available

The Strategic Plan – Winter 2003 version – that all of the AFHA Stakeholders have contributed to, is finally together and available. Copies were distributed at the Spring Stakeholders meeting. If you would like a copy but do not have one, please let us know, and we can mail you a printed copy, or send you an electronic one, depending on your preference. Contact Jeremy S. Morris [Jeremy.morris@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:Jeremy.morris@mail.wvu.edu); 304-293-2941 ext 2456

The Strategic Plan is also available on our web site at:

<http://www.ahc.caf.wvu.edu/heritage/strapln.htm>

## Oral History Project

Another project that the AFHA is associated with is VISTA volunteer Matthew Branch's book project, sponsored by Shavers Fork Coalition. Matt hopes to give a glimpse of what life has been like over the past 100 years on Cheat Mountain and the Shavers Fork Watershed. He is examining all aspects of life, from farming to logging, from hunting to old CCC activity. Stories about people like Doc Auville, an herb doctor have surfaced, as well as the region's only known gold mine, which was a 1920s version of a tourist trap. While Mr. Branch is working writing and publishing the book, he is always looking for more stories to include, and would love to hear from you. He can be reached at (304)636-9327 or mjbranch@yahoo.com.

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### *Northern Forest continued:*

They have done extensive research to develop a wealth index based on indicators in the fields of education, economy, environment, community and culture. They are using this index to help guide discussions and bring diverse partners together to discuss the future of the region.

Bringing together a leadership exchange of diverse community leaders, a draft strategic framework was developed identifying core strategies:

- Culture & regional identity
- Place-based education and lifelong learning
- Integrity of forest ecosystem & biodiversity management
- Value-added forest products
- Tourism & recreation
- Small business development
- Telecommunications & transportation infrastructure
- Health and healthy communities

The emerging successes so far evident from these strategies include increased use of innovative land conservation strategies such as private easements, heritage development, increase in forest products, and strengthened communities.

The roles of the Northern Forest Center within this effort have focused on:

- helping to develop the regional strategy,
- encouraging place-based partnerships,
- assisting development of sustainable enterprises,
- beginning development of a "Ways of the Woods" traveling exhibit that brings interactive exhibits to communities across the region.

Lessons learned and successful strategies include:

- Raise awareness of connections between people & places
- Develop & promote shared understanding & vision – this requires building trust between participants
- Develop & advance policy and actions – later step after consensus on values
- Harness market forces
- Create leverage through partnerships and collaboration

The legacy they hope to leave will be a model for sustainable and prosperous living in the forest.

## Minigrants

The process for applying for AFHA Minigrants was unveiled at the April 11 meeting. The currently available money, \$59,000, will be distributed over three years, with pilot communities being prioritized during the first year. Hopefully, additional funding will be found in the future to enlarge the "pot" available.

For this first "pilot" round of applications, the following guidelines will be used:

- Each application must come from a participating community.
- Each application must show how the project relates to forest heritage
- Each application must show community match and/or support
- Application deadlines May 15, Sept 15, January 15.

A committee made up of project PIs & three Steering Committee members will decide on the applications.

For a copy of the application guidelines, contact:

Jeremy S. Morris [Jeremy.morris@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:Jeremy.morris@mail.wvu.edu); 304-293-2941 ext 2456

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## International Heritage Development Conf. Pittsburgh, PA June 7-11

The Alliance of National Heritage Areas is hosting the International Heritage Development Conference in June. The program will begin on Saturday June 7<sup>th</sup> with education course in the "Basics of Heritage Development". The morning session will introduce attendees to major concepts of heritage development with lessons learned from leading heritage area practitioners. The afternoon will feature various discussion topics lead by heritage area directors and consultants.

The conference will offer several working sessions that focus on the "nuts and bolts" of heritage development. Sessions will educate attendees on interpretation, branding and marketing concepts, coalition & consensus building, constructing capital campaigns, etc. In addition there will be mobile workshops that will take attendees out into the field, using the Rivers of Steel Heritage Area as a learning laboratory.

The conference also features luncheon speaker **Lynne Rosetto Kaspar** host of public radio's *The Splendid Table* and keynote speaker Pulitzer Prize-winning author **David McCullough**, author of *Truman* and narrator of Ken Burns' *Civil War*.

Several AFHA staff will be attending the conference; any stakeholders interested in attending should check the website below and contact AFHA staffer: Phyllis Baxter [phyllisb@meer.net](mailto:phyllisb@meer.net) <http://www.riversofsteel.org/conference/>

### Note on Summer Event posting

Note that staff gathered the event listing on Page 4 from web searches. We KNOW that we probably missed a few key events, but hope that the list gives some idea of what our area can collectively offer in support of forest heritage, culture and education. Beginning in June, AFHA staff will run a monthly e-mail list of events from our communities, make submissions to [Jeremy.morris@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:Jeremy.morris@mail.wvu.edu); keep submissions to forest related events, distinct community cultural activities, or educational opportunities. First email June 1

## Investigating National Heritage Area Designation for AFHA

Brenda Barrett, director of the National Heritage Area program for the National Park Service, presented the National Heritage Area concept to the Stakeholders. Some highlights of her presentation:

- Heritage areas are a strategy, they help jump boundaries – geographically and across fields of interest
- Based on building partnerships & working cooperatively
- Include planning based around a shared heritage
- Bring together shared past to build for the future.
- Often based on a theme of industrial heritage of region.
- Often include heritage tourism development.
- Community and economic development for the region.

Heritage Areas can be self-designated – as AFHA is so far – or part of a statewide program.

National Heritage Areas are designated by an act of Congress – individually written legislation tailored to each Heritage Area. There have been precedents established of how they are designated, but there is no formal “admittance” program.

There are now 23 National Heritage Areas that have been designated between 1984 and 2000, primarily located in the Eastern United States. National Heritage Areas:

- Located in 17 states
- Include 158,635 square miles
- 45,509,466 people live within National Heritage Areas
- 113 Congressional Districts
- 20% of National Historic Landmarks are within a NHA

**The National Park Service** has been designated by Congress as a lead agency to help work with National Heritage Areas. The local community manages a heritage area and makes it happen, the National Park Service gives grants and technical assistance.

For NPS, Heritage Areas are an outreach and grants program, not a land management program. Heritage Areas ARE NOT National Parks and NPS owns no new property.

NPS will assist with initial feasibility study including:

- National Importance Assessment and evaluation
- Evidence of local support and involvement

Once designated, NPS develops a cooperative agreement with the local management entity (usually the heritage area non-profit organization). The grant money will be distributed according to this agreement, with usual Federal rules for projects that receive the money. There are no regulations or requirements associated with being in a National Heritage Area, or applying other than for use of Federal money.

**Funding** usually includes \$10 million dollars, up to \$1 million a year, over 15 years of establishment of the NHA. This funding must be matched, and management plan must be completed first before projects. Can be used for operating funds, seed funding, and incentives, not for land acquisition.

Heritage Areas often arise in areas with tough economies, who are losing industry, population, and youth. They can be used as a community development strategy to build partnerships and benefit communities.

There is a major growth now in Heritage Areas, both state programs and nationally. There are 14 new bills for National Heritage Areas pending, and over 200 ad hoc heritage areas

across the country. Heritage Areas can help knit things together so communities can work together on a regional basis.

In the discussion later in the Stakeholders Meeting, the group passed the following resolution:

### ***AFHA shall investigate National Heritage Area designation.***

Brenda Barrett was asked to reiterate requirements –

- Have a designated boundary
- Have a theme of national significance
- Have community support and capacity
- Receive legislative designation

Some of the issues discussed and questions raised included:

- Industry groups are not completely comfortable making the commitment to move forward with NHA at the present time
- How much staff time will it take, might it interfere with other work ?
- Concern that existing grant funding will be done in two more years, might this provide future sustainability?
- A need to look at other areas, pros and cons, ramifications

**Questions & research items** raised to guiding this investigation:

- Are we ready or is this premature? Do we have a strong enough identity?
- Look at other NHA pros and cons, lessons learned
- Get templates of management plans and legislation
- What are the challenges?
- What, if any, opposition has there been in other states?
- Have there been rejections? Why?
- Impact on private land owners
- Are there winners and losers in this process?
- Would it generate opposition against federal involvement?
- What are environment assessment requirements for management plans and would that create problems?
- What are the requirements for match, when and how will match be developed.
- Need stakeholder involvement & education prior to approaching congressional representatives

### **Timeline, responsibilities, and next steps**

1. Encourage other stakeholders not at the meeting to express their concerns and questions, add these items to the research agenda. If anyone has additional questions to add, please forward these to the AFHA staff.
2. Summer 2003 – staff (Phyllis lead) and organization task group will work on doing this research,
3. Will report back to stakeholders on these issues/concerns one month prior to fall stakeholder meeting
4. Stakeholders will vote at the fall meeting on whether to move forward with seeking National Heritage Area designation for AFHA.

### **For more information,**

A more complete write-up of the Brenda’s presentation and the AFHA discussion regarding NHA can be found on our web site:

Web site for National Heritage Area program:  
[www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas/](http://www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas/)

# Summer Events in Forest Heritage Communities

## **Rail Fan Weekend-5/17 to 5/18**

### **Cass Scenic Railroad State Park**

Railroad buffs enjoy a weekend of train excursions. Reservations required. Call 1-800-CALLWVA and ask to be connected to Cass Railroad State Park.

## **Helvetia Community Dance, May 17<sup>th</sup> and June 7<sup>th</sup>.** 8 p.m. till 11 p.m. at the Community Hall.

Music by the Helvetia Star Band.

## **Rail & Trail Festival-5/24 to 5/25 -**

**Durbin**--2nd Annual Rail and Trail Festival, anniversary of the first steam engine to Durbin. Entertainment, crafts and food. call 877-686-7245.

## **International Woodchoppers Festival**

**Memorial Day Weekend**, Webster Springs, WV Southeastern Timbersport Championship call Webster Springs Main Street 304-847-7291

**Forks of Gauley Bike Tour 5/23 to 5/26** Memorial Day Weekend Elk River Touring Center. 866-572-3771 25-30 miles per day; experienced riders

## **Little Yough Summer Music Festival**

Visit Oakland, Md every Friday evening for a taste of regional musicians @ the Mountain Fresh Pavilion For more information visit [www.littleyough.com/](http://www.littleyough.com/)

## **Augusta Heritage workshops all summer long**

### **Augusta Heritage Festival August 8-10**

### **Davis and Elkins College Elkins, WV**

Visit [www.augustaheritage.com](http://www.augustaheritage.com) for schedule of events

## **Civilian Conservation Corps Reunion--6/7**

Watoga State Park

## **McHenry Highland Festival June 7**

Gaelic music and dance demonstrations, contact: 301-387-3093 or [jmcgee@garrettcollege.edu](mailto:jmcgee@garrettcollege.edu); visit [www.highlandfest.info](http://www.highlandfest.info)

## **Moonlight Fire on the Greenbrier Rail Excursion—**

**6/14, 7/12, 8/9** On full moon nights, late evening excursion, buffet dinner, stars in remote wilderness, far from ambient lights; reservations, call 877-686-7245, or visit [www.mountainrail.com](http://www.mountainrail.com).

**Father's Day Canoe Trip & Hike- June 14 -** Deep Creek Lake State Park 301-387-7067

## **Western Maryland Loggers/Forestry Field Day**

**June 13 & 14** @ Garrett County Fairgrounds

For more information: call 301-895-5369 [mdforests.org/fieldays.htm](http://mdforests.org/fieldays.htm)

## **Maryland Free Fishing Days June 7 & 14, July 4**

Fish Maryland freshwaters w/out license on these days

## **Savage River State Forest Van Tour June 17, July 5,8,15,22,29 August 5,12,19,26**

New Germany State Park-- Participants will look at multiple-use forest management, scenic overlooks and native plants and animals. Call 301-895-5759

## **Cass Homecoming-6/27 to 6/29-Cass**

Former residents of Cass come "home" for a reunion.

**Annual Art in the Park Deep Creek Discovery Center,** July 4 & 5, Artisan Demonstration and sales, Bluegrass jam, contact: 301-387-7067

## **Edible & Medicinal Plant Hike; August 2 Deep Creek Lake State Park**

Ramble the Youghiogheny River with local naturalist Contact: 301-387-7067

**Mountain Fresh Produce Market, Mt. Fresh Pavilion Oakland MD** Wed & Sat mornings Mid-July – October

**Helvetia, Swiss National Holiday** August 2, 2003 Swiss Dance and cultural celebration

For more information visit [www.helvetiawv.com](http://www.helvetiawv.com)

## **Log Cabin Quilter's Guild Quilt Show**

Elkins, WV August 8, 2003 - August 9, 2003

First Baptist Church Call 304-636-4531

## **Garrett County Fair August 10th through 16<sup>th</sup>**

Contact Oakland Main Street 301-334-9431 [gtolbert@garrettcac.org](mailto:gtolbert@garrettcac.org)

## **International Bowhunters World Championships, Snowshoe Mountain-8/14 to 8/17**

world championship event, 1800 archers from around the world compete for title of World Champion. call 877-441-4FUN.

**Hick Festival 8/31-9/2 Parsons, WV** Wood chopping/logging events; horse/pony pull, coon chase, homemade applebutter, crafts pulling, 304-478-3747 [vick@iolinc.net](mailto:vick@iolinc.net)

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